GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:313
ANSWERED ON:11.12.2000
SAFETY OF DOLPHIN POPULATION
AVSM, BRIG.(RETD.) KAMAKHYA PRASAD SINGH DEO

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the rivers/sea and other water resources where dolphins have been found in the country ;

(b) whether the unique river dolphins of Brahmaputra are facing extinction;

(c) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken to save the dolphin population in the country ?

Answer

ANSWER MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU)
(a), (b),(c) & (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.
STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a),(b),(c) & (d) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 313 REGARDING SAFETY OF DOLPHIN POPULATION BY SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO DUE FOR REPLY ON 11.12.2000
(a) Dolphins in India are found in the fresh water as well as marine ecosystems. The Gangetic river dolphin (Platanista gangetica) is a fresh water dolphin and is found in Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna river system of Nepal,India,Bangladesh and Bhutan. The marine species viz., Snubfin dolphin (Orcaella brevirostris), Common dolphin (Delphinus delphis) and Bottlenose (Tursiopstruncatus), Plumbeous dolphin (Sousa plumbea), Broad beaked dolphin (Lagenorhynchus species) etc. are found in the Indian ocean, Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea.
(b),(c)&(d) The Zoological Survey of India has listed the Indian population as vulnerable i.e. there is no immediate threat of extinction of the species.

Steps taken by the Government of India to save the dolphin population include:

1) All species of Indian dolphin are included in Schedule-I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 , thereby getting highest degree of protection. Hunting and dealing the products of these species is banned.
2) Export- Import Policy of Government of India puts a total ban on the export of all species of wild animals and their products.
3) The trade of all dolphin species is regulated by the provision of CITES

(Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna)4) State Governments have notified important habitats of dolphin as National Parks and Sanctuaries.The Government of India decided on 7th November, 2000 to provide 100% funding both for recurring and non-recurring expenditure (other than the salary of the existing staff) for Marine National Parks and Sanctuaries. 5) Regular patrolling of coastal areas is done by the protection staff. Help of Indian Coast Guards is taken whenever required for protecting the endangered species.